

DAILY CLARION.

J. L. POWER, Proprietor.
Oliver Chilton, Editor.

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 1886.

The House local-option temperance bill was the special order in the Senate last night.

See the article on the Lien Law, and Statistics of the Mississippi Legislature on first page.

NATCHEZ is to be lighted by electricity—forty five lights of 1200 candle power each—the annual cost to be \$5000.00.

The Governor on yesterday, approved the bill allowing Judge Watson a fee of five thousand dollars, in addition to \$1,000 already paid. The House refused to concur in Senate amendment, and the Senate receded.

The Girl's College gets \$25,000 for 1886, same amount for 1887, and \$7000 for improvements in both years. Total \$57,000. The amount asked by the trustees was \$114,000; and the amount recommended by the House Appropriation Committee was \$65,000.

The citizens of West Point, on Thursday last, took the preliminary steps for the entertainment of the Press Association to convene there in May. Committees were appointed on reception, banquet and hall, music, literary and musical entertainment. An excursion to the Industrial Institute and College is one of the items in the programme.

The bill introduced by Mr. McKie, of Marshall county, amending chapter 10, section 586 of the Code of 1880, exempting all disabled Confederate soldiers from paying a privilege tax, has passed the Senate, and that class of citizens for whose benefit the bill was introduced, will have cause to cherish a kindly feeling for its author.

It certainly was not the fault of the Representatives of Oktibbeha that the appropriation for the A. and M. College was cut down from \$27,500 to \$20,000 year. Mr. Carroll not only made a splendid speech, but was listened to with very special attention, while his colleague, Mr. Askew, gave some solid reasons why the full amount asked for should be voted. The sum voted is in addition to the annual interest derived from the Land Scrip fund.

We happened in the Senate last night as Judge Povel was making a powerful argument against the Local Option Bill. He declared that if the bill passes, the whiskey element will carry DeSoto, whereas there are now only four saloons in the county—and that such would be its effect in other counties now more or less prohibition. He had never signed a whiskey petition and his influence was known to be for temperance, but he opposed the bill because he considered it a move in the wrong direction—a mistake on the part of the good people who were asking for it. Senators Reynolds, Houston, Burkitt and others had spoken to the same effect. Senator Love was earnestly advocating the passage of the bill as we left the Chamber.

Congressional.

We note in the Record that the following bills were introduced into Congress by Mississippi members, on the 1st of March:

PUBLIC PRINTING.

Mr. Barksdale introduced a bill (H. R. 6106) to provide additional accommodations for executing the public printing and expediting the same.

HORATIO N. SPENCER, DECEASED.

Mr. Barksdale also introduced a bill (H. R. 6107) for the relief of the legal representative of Horatio N. Spencer, deceased.

CATTLE BREEDING, ETC.

Mr. Barksdale also presented a concurrent resolution to print 6,000 additional copies of the report of the consuls of the United States on cattle breeding and dairy farming.

NATIONAL CEMETERY, CORINTH, MISS. Mr. Allen introduced a bill (H. R. 6108) to construct a road to the national cemetery at Corinth, Miss.

ROAD TO NATIONAL CEMETERY NEAR VICKSBURG.

Mr. Catchings introduced a bill (H. R. 6109) providing for the repair of the road leading from Vicksburg to the national cemetery heretofore constructed by the United States.

PUBLIC BUILDING AT NATCHEZ, MISS. Mr. Van Eaton introduced a bill (H. R. 6110) for the erection of a public building at Natchez, Miss.

LIGHT-HOUSE, PEARL RIVER, MISS.

Mr. Van Eaton introduced a bill (H. R. 6111) making an appropriation to erect a light-house at the mouth of Pearl River, Miss.

BRIDGE ACROSS WEST PASCAGOULA RIVER, MISSISSIPPI.

Mr. Van Eaton also introduced a bill (H. R. 6112) to require a New Orleans, Mobile and Texas Railroad Company to construct and maintain a suitable draw in said company's bridge across the West Pascagoula River in the State of Mississippi.

A State Board of Equalization.

The Constitution of Mississippi declares that taxation shall be equal and uniform, and the object of all laws regulating the assessment of taxes, should be to secure equality and uniformity.

It really makes no difference to the taxpayer whether all property in the State be assessed at its full value, at more than its value, or at less than its value; provided, that the same rule shall apply in the assessment of all property; because, since a certain amount is necessary to defray the expenses of the State, the valuation of property is decreased; the rate of taxation must be increased. For instance: If the amount to be raised by the State tax is \$300,000, and the valuation of the real and personal property is \$120,000,000, a levy of two mills and a-half will suffice, if there be no insolventcies, but if the value of real and personal property is \$100,000,000, a levy of three mills will be necessary. So that to the taxpayer the valuation of all property being fixed according to the same rule, it makes no difference whether it is rated high or low.

Able from the Constitutional requirement that taxation shall be equal and uniform, common fairness demands that no man shall bear more than his just share of the burdens of government, and, to that end, laws have been enacted with a view to have all property taxed according to its value.

The Act of March 22, 1884, entitled "An Act to amend section 503, of the Code of 1880, in relation to examining the assessment rolls, and to require the Boards of Supervisors to equalize the assessment of taxes," confers on the Boards of Supervisors "authority to raise or reduce, the valuation of any property, real or personal, in their respective counties," and requires them to equalize the value of such property so that "all lands and personal property throughout their counties, of the same value, shall be assessed at the same price—as nearly so as practicable."

This is a good law, and if faithfully executed would remedy the injustice of unequal assessments in the levy of taxes for county purposes, because if the property of a county is assessed at one-half its value, and all "of the same value," "be assessed at the same price," it must result that the county taxation will be equal and uniform.

This law was passed to prevent the inequality of taxation arising from the failure of property-owners to value their property by the same rule, rather than to secure the assessment of all property at its exact value; and being applicable to counties only, it may happen that while there may be no inequality of valuation in property situated in any county of this State, there may be gross undervaluation in many of the counties, as compared with the valuation of property situated in other counties.

For purposes of county taxation, there might be a different rule for valuing property for each county, and no one would be harmed by it so long as all lands and personal property of the same value in the same county should be assessed at the same price; but to preserve equality of valuation, and, consequently, of taxation for State purposes, the rule by which property is valued must be uniform throughout the State, in all the counties, or "as nearly so as practicable." It will not do to have property situated in one county assessed at its fair market value, and property in another county of like character and value assessed at one-third or one-half its value. This would produce gross inequality of taxation.

Every citizen of the State who owns any property, no matter in what county it may be situated, has a direct pecuniary interest in seeing that there shall be a fair and equal valuation of all the property in the State. How can such a valuation be secured? Not through the Boards of Supervisors, for the jurisdiction of such Board is confined to a single county. The authority to equalize valuations as between the counties must be lodged with a body having jurisdiction throughout the State.

The Senate has passed a bill constituting the Railroad Commissioners and the State Auditor, a Board of Equalizers, and devolving upon it the duty of equalizing the assessments between the several counties, just as the Act of March 12, 1884 required Boards of Supervisors to equalize assessments between individuals. The bill is short and simple, and will prove effective if it become a law. Such a measure was suggested by the Governor in his Message, and the tables prepared by the Auditor and published in his annual report, make the duty of the Legislature to pass some measure that will relieve against the continued violation of the Constitutional guaranty that taxation shall be equal and uniform, imperative.

We think that the bill is the most important measure of the session. No valid objection was urged against it in the Senate, and none can be in the House, and it ought to be passed.

Rev. J. WOODBRIDGE, the venerable and beloved pastor of the Presbyterian church at Wesson, died on Friday, 20th ult. He had been a member of the Synod of Mississippi for nearly fifty years. He leaves three sons in the ministry—one at Rodney, Miss., one a Missionary in China, and the other, pastor of a church in Chicago.

FOR THE CLARION:

House Bill No. 570.

This Bill is styled An Act in Relation to Public Schools. I have read the bill with some degree of care, and no little interest. There is no measure before the Legislature that concerns the whole people so much as this act in relation to our public schools. Whatever the State does in educating the masses of her children, the masses can never hope to attend any other educational institution in the State. Last fall a bright young girl came to me to be examined for a place in the Columbus school, having been told that it was free as to board as well as tuition. She entered eagerly upon the task before her, and when she had nearly completed it, she stopped suddenly and in despair, remarking that I had just told her to another young girl, who asked me the cost of board per month; that it would be the actual cost of the material and preparation. This remark shattered her hopes and dissipated her bright visions.

The State has many thousands of these, and her property and stable policy depend upon what she does for these rather than for the few. If the State must ever choose, because of her inability, between providing for the many and not the few, in education, she has but one choice—she can't hesitate. I trust, however, that the old ship is sailing on smooth waters, and is not carrying too much sail. Some of our legislators may be like the young soldier early in the sixties, who was sent to Norfolk with others from the mountains of Virginia. There he had his first view of the sea. After looking seaward some time, he returned to camp full of wonder and astonishment, and meeting a comrade he commented: "La, Bill, I can see out of old State is a big thing. We ought not to mistake between a false economy and a wise policy. We should ask, what ought to be done, rather than what will it cost? Economy is not always found in cheapness, nor in doing nothing."

This House Bill, Number 570, would in my judgment, put our public school system in better shape than it has ever been. I think that I see in it vast improvement on any former management. The cost would not be perhaps as much as now. It proposes something like justice in paying teachers. That is, it proposes to pay teachers in proportion to their capacity. There is one proposed change, however, that I would be sorry to see a law—shortening our common school curriculum. The efficiency of our public schools will not be enhanced by lessening the qualifications of teachers for the highest places. I don't believe that it is in the nature of things to make a first grade teacher out of a second grade teacher, but by increasing the capacity of the second grade teacher. Then our people need the curriculum as it is, and indeed frequently broader. But take the bill as a whole, it is excellent.

E. D. MILLER.

Holly Springs.

NEEDED.

We are needing very much our part of the General Distribution Fund and the Railroad tax. The law provides that this railroad tax be made, in January, and the railroad tax to be paid in December. This failure to comply with the law is costing our teachers about \$200 a month. Better by far double the poll tax, than to tax teachers in this way.

E. D. M.

The Penitentiary Ring—At it Again.

EDITOR CLARION—I learn that a bill has been introduced in the Legislature looking to the hiring of the Penitentiary convicts to individuals to work on plantations or anywhere else the legislators may choose to want them, and that the State shall receive from such leases a sum of money for the Penitentiary and convicts. This is an adroit scheme for the leasing of the Penitentiary and convicts in a manner and for a purpose in direct opposition to the will of the people as expressed through the press of the entire State. After the numerous expressions of public sentiment on this subject, it would be little less than an outrage for the Legislature to pass an act empowering the leases of the Penitentiary to sublet convicts to work on farms. It is in the known will of the people that after the present lease terminates, the convicts shall be kept inside the walls of the Penitentiary or worked on public works. The sentiment opposed to their being worked on farms is growing every day, and we do hope that the Legislature will respect the will of their constituents, and refuse to countenance this odious leasing system any further. The House has already shown by a vote of 23 to 1, that the sentiment in that body is opposed to working convicts on farms, and if I mistake not, the sentiment of the Senate is about the same.

If members of the Senate and House would just turn to the published reports of the Superintendent of the Penitentiary for the years past, and the report of the investigating committee of last session, and see the enormous death rate of the convicts in the swamp, as compared with those worked in other portions of the State and at the walls, and pursue the investigation to its logical result, they would find:

First, That nine out of ten convicts who are sub-leased are working on plantations in the swamps.

Second, That of this number a large proportion are convicts who were sentenced from the bill country.

Third, That the death rate among convicts working in the swamps is about three to one as compared with those working in other portions of the State, or employed at the walls.

Fourth, That of the deaths at the walls a large proportion of them are of convicts sent in from the farms in the swamps.

Fifth, That the deaths among the convicts who were sentenced from the hill country and after coming to the Penitentiary are sent to the swamps to work on farms, is enormous.

Sixth, That the cause of all this is that they are not acclimated.

Seventh, That it is simply inhuman to expose prisoners who are only sentenced

for a year or two in the Penitentiary, to such unnecessary exposure and great risk of death. The effect of the law in its present bearing is a sentence to the Penitentiary with the additional sentence (imposed by the leasing system) of standing eight chances out of ten to be sent to the swamps, and out of every three deaths the chances are two to one that he will be one of them. Or, in other words, that in every three deaths of convicts leased to work on farms in the swamps, two of them will be convicted from the hill country.

Now, Mr. Editor, it is time that somebody should speak out plainly on this subject, and I submit it to every candid, conscientious man in the Senate and House, if this state of affairs does not call for relief, promptly and effectively. Colonel Hamilton draws it very mild when he says in his report to the committee, entitled "Alleged Ill-Treatment of Convicts": "We do not doubt but that in some instances, wrongs may have been done some convict, or they may have been punished at times when probably they ought not to have been, or that some have not been frost-bitten, and some accidentally hurt." It is fair to presume that if the sub-leasing system is continued, such instances as those mentioned above, will be more than likely to be increased, as a long abuse of any privilege or power only makes the offenders more careless and reckless of the penalties imposed by the law. It is better that the State should be at an annual expense of \$25,000 or \$30,000 than that the present odious and outrageous leasing system should be longer continued.

Let the convicts be put on some great public work in which the State-at-large will be benefited, where they will be under the direct supervision of sworn officers of the State, and where they will as little as possible come in competition with citizen labor, and at the same time not be a burden on the State, and the people will be satisfied; but nothing short of this will satisfy them.

The present Legislature must dispose of the Penitentiary question. The people of the State are anxiously awaiting to hear the result of the deliberations of their Representatives on this question. They have expressed their wish through their Representatives and through the press.

Never let it be said that the State of Mississippi, with all her vast resources, was in such sore straits for money that her Representatives consented to trade in the flesh and blood of her helpless convicts in order to turn into the State Treasury the pitiful sum of a few thousand dollars annually.

CITIZEN.

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE.

SENATE—FORTY-SEVENTH DAY.

THURSDAY, March 4, 1886.

NIGHT SESSION.

Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Barksdale in the chair.

Mr. Barksdale called up House Bill: An act for the relief of T. T. Hamilton, sheriff of Carroll county. Recommended to Committee on Claims.

On motion of Mr. Gage the Senate reconsidered the vote heretofore had, indefinitely postponing an act for the relief of T. W. Vaux, jailor of Tallahatchie county. The bill was recommended to Committee on Claims.

Mr. Seal gave notice that he would at some future day, move to reconsider the vote whereby the Senate indefinitely postponed an act to appoint an Inspector of Bridges for Jackson county, and for other purposes.

Mr. Batchelor, for a Special Committee, made the following report: That the committee appointed to consider Senate Bill: An act to amend sec. 1695, of Chap. 58, Code 1880, in relation to verdicts of juries. Do pass as amended.

The bill was taken up. The special committee to whom the bill was referred, recommended an amendment by striking out all after enacting clause and inserting new matter; adopted. The bill was indefinitely postponed.

Mr. Ross offered a memorial to the Legislature from the Knights of Labor, of Water Valley, Mississippi; read and referred to Committee on Agriculture.

Reports were received from the following Committees: Judiciary, Finance, Claims, Counties and County Boundaries, Temperance, Registration and Election.

The Senate Committee appointed to confer with the committee from the House in regard to the fee of Judge J. W. C. Watson, recommended that the Senate recede from its amendment and do concur in the bill as it passed the House.

The special committee to whom was referred, an act to amend sec. 1694, Code 1880, relative to the selection of grand jurors and for other purposes, recommended that the bill do pass.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

Mr. Dadds—Relating to the competency of witnesses. Judiciary.

Mr. Hamilton, of Holmes—For the relief of John D. Wallace, of Holmes county. Claims.

Mr. Benham—To amend sec. 23, of an act entitled an act to amend and reduce into one act, the act incorporating the city of Natchez, and several acts amendatory thereto, approved Jan. 29, 1877. Corporations.

Mr. Batchelor—To incorporate the Logue Cotton Gathering Machine Company. Corporations.

HOUSE BILLS ON THIRD READING.

To amend an act to prevent stock running at large in certain counties, approved March 5, 1878, the provisions of which were repealed by an act approved March 5, 1880, so far as it relates to the counties of Lee and Prentiss. Passed.

For preventing the evils of intemperance by local option in any county in this State, by submitting the question of prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors to the qualified voters of each county, and to provide penalties for its violation, and for other purposes. Made special order for tomorrow night.

Mr. Love called up House bill, an act to authorize the board of supervisors of Amite, Jones and Wayne counties to have the lands assessed in 1880, and hold regular monthly meetings. Passed.

On motion of Mr. Love, the bill was tabled.

To amend chap. 10, sec. 586, Code of 1880, in relation to the exemption of Confederate soldiers from privilege tax. Passed with amendments.

To amend sec. 3109, Code of 1880, and the acts amendatory thereto, in relation to wages of county prisoners in the custody of county contractors, in so far as it relates to Madison, Tippah, Bolivar, Marshall, Lawrence and Washington counties. Indefinitely postponed.

For the better protection of Ship Island Harbor and the road of the same in the county of Harrison and for other purposes. Passed.

To amend chapter 132, acts of 1880, in relation to additional justice of the peace and constable in District No. 1, of Jefferson county. Indefinitely postponed.

For the relief of W. L. Linfield of Copiah county, Mississippi. Indefinitely postponed.

To repeal sec. 2407, Code 1880, so far as the same relates to the 2d Supervisor's District of Hinds county. Indefinitely postponed.

An act for the relief of Jessie A. Brown, a minor of Hinds county. Lost on third reading.

Mr. Houston offered the following resolution: Resolved, That the House of Representatives be requested to return to the Senate, House Bill, an act to provide compensation for J. W. C. Watson for legal services rendered the State of Mississippi in the railroad supervision cases in the Federal and State courts.

At 11 o'clock the Senate adjourned.

HOUSE—FORTY-SEVENTH DAY.

THURSDAY, March 4th, 1886.

NIGHT SESSION.

Speaker Sharp in the chair.

Special order—General Appropriation Bill submitted by the Committee was taken up.

House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider same.

Mr. Norrell, of Yazoo, in the chair.

After three and a half hours spent in considering same the Committee rose, reported progress and asked leave to sit again. Reported.

The report of the Conference Committee on Judge Watson's fee, announcing that the Senate recedes from its amendment to pay him \$9000 and concurs in House Bill which fixes his fee at in addition to \$1000.00 previously paid him was received and adopted.

At 11:05 the House adjourned.

SENATE—FORTY-EIGHTH DAY.

FRIDAY, March 5, 1886.

Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Gov. Shands in the chair.

Reports were received from the following Committees: Judiciary, Railroads, Military, Corporations and Federal Relations.

Mr. Burritt offered the following resolution, which was tabled:

Resolved, That the Senate accept the invitation to visit the Bill at Vicksburg tonight, and make the local option bill the special order to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock.

Mr. Burkitt was granted leave of absence from all night sessions.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

Mr. Ross—To extend the powers of corporate authorities of the city of Water Valley, of the charter thereof, and of all amendatory acts thereto, and for other purposes. Judiciary.

Mr. Gayles—To amend sec. 839, Code of 1880, so as to make the same apply to traveling miscreants and agents. Judiciary.

Mr. Houston—To repeal sec. 2 of an act to regulate the sale of oleomargarine, and to promote the public health, approved March 5, 1882. Agriculture.

Mr. Houston—To regulate the sale of seed cotton. Agriculture.

Mr. Houston—To amend sec. 1590, Code of 1880, in relation to service of process upon infants. Judiciary.

Mr. Houston—To prohibit secret trusts. Judiciary.

Mr. Houston—To repeal sec. 1812, Code of 1880, in relation to motion docket and surities in the chancery court, and for other purposes. Judiciary.

Mr. Houston—To amend sec. 1811, Code of 1880, in relation to the issue docket and entries in the chancery court. Judiciary.

Mr. Houston offered S. J. R., entitled a Joint resolution, to amend article 6, sec. 16, of the Constitution. Constitutional Amendments.

Mr. Dadds called up House Bill, granting relief from the penalties imposed and to render enforceable certain contracts under sec. 659, Code 1880. Special order for Tuesday, March 9, 1886.

SENATE BILLS ON THIRD READING.

To amend the Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad charter. Passed.

To amend sec. 2146, Code 1880, in relation to powers of boards of supervisors over justice districts. Indefinitely postponed.

For the relief of certain physicians. Passed with amendments.

The Senate receded from its amendment allowing Judge J. W. C. Watson \$9,000 for his services in the Supervision cases.

To amend chap. 69, Code 1880, so as to prevent chancellors to take on submission and decide causes in vacation. Passed.

To prohibit the sale of pistols and pistol cartridges in this State. Indefinitely postponed.

At 10:30 the Senate went into Executive Session and after some time spent therein, the doors were thrown open and legislative business resumed.

To prevent trespass on lands and for other purposes. Passed.

To repeal secs. 1499 and 1838, Code 1880, and act approved March 15, 1884, in relation to final records in circuit and county courts and for other purposes. Indefinitely postponed.

To amend chap. 132, acts of 1880, in relation to election of additional justice of the peace and constable in district number one, Jefferson county, Mississippi.

To change the boundary lines of the corporate limits of the town of Boonsville, Prentiss county, Mississippi.

An act supplemental to an act to incorporate the town of Flora, in the county of Madison.

For the relief of D. J. Cameron, late Sheriff of Lawrence county.

To authorize the board of supervisors of Marshall county to sell or lease a portion of the land in said county, known as the poor house land.

For the relief of W. C. Pigg & Co., late of the county of Noxubee.

To change the time of holding the circuit court of Lowndes county.

To create an additional justice district in supervisors district No. 1, Franklin county.

HOUSE BILLS ON THIRD READING.

In relation to public revenue so far as the same relates to Smith county. Passed.

To provide for a new registration of the voters of Tunica county. Indefinitely postponed.

To prohibit the sale of spirituous, vinous and malt liquors within five miles of Prairie Station in Monroe county. Passed.

To authorize the board of supervisors of Quitman county to employ some suitable person to revise and transcribe the poll books. Indefinitely postponed.

Senate adjourned at 1:50 until 7:30 to-morrow.

HOUSE—FORTY-EIGHTH DAY.

FRIDAY, March 5th, 1886.

House met pursuant to adjournment.

Speaker Sharp in the chair.

Mr. Harrison moved that the Resolution providing that the Appropriation Bill be considered only at night session be reconsidered. Carried.

House then went into Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the same.

Mr. Niles in the chair.

Reading discussion of the matter a communication was received from the Governor stating his action in regard to calling out the Volunteer Southernmost Vicksburg to quell the riot at Mayersville recently, and asking an appropriation to defray the expenses incurred by them in responding to this call; and his approval of an act to compensate Judge J. W. C. Watson for legal services rendered the State in the late Supervision cases in Federal and State courts.

Mr. Burdine in the chair.

After some three hours spent in considering the above bill the Committee rose, and reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

At 1 o'clock the House adjourned.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Mr. Trigg called up his resolution providing that consideration of all bills be limited hereafter to thirty minutes, fifteen to each side. Adopted.

House resumed consideration of Appropriation Bill in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Carraway in the chair.

Proceeding the same a resolution of the students of the Mississippi Industrial Institute and College addressed to the Legislative Body of the State of Mississippi, in session at Jackson, was received and read.

This resolution, which was drawn up by the students of that institution in meeting assembled, over which meeting Miss Lizzie Wright presided, and of which Miss Katie Cruse was secretary, was signed by over 200 students and earnestly asked a liberal appropriation at the hands of the present Legislature; that the institution might continue its work of good to the fair daughters of our State.

After two hours spent in consideration of the same the Committee rose, reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

Report of Committee on Contingent Expenses on report of Gov. Lowry's expenditure of Executive Contingent Fund, received. To be taken up to-morrow.

Report of Committee to investigate Penitentiary, received and tabled subject to call.

H. B. an act to amend an act to change the time for holding the circuit courts of the 4th judicial district of this State. Passed.

To authorize the purchase by boards of supervisors of missing and needed volumes of State Reports. Passed.

To amend the Miss. & Tenn. R. R. charter. Railroads, with permission to report at any time.